

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6153

INFO DIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 3620

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: DEMARTINO'S ADDRESS TO THE PSI CONGRESS

SUMMARY: IN THREE-HOURS ADDRESS TO PSI CONGRESS DEMARTINO

CLEARLY INDICATED THAT THE PSI IS AVAILABLE FOR A DC-PSI

GOVERNMENT WITHOUT PCI PARTICIPATION, BUT WHICH WOULD NOT

REJECT PCI SUPPORT, IF OFFERED. OF THE PCI THE PSI WOULD

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DEMAND THAT IT EITHER FULLY OPPOSE OR FULLY SUPPORT THE

GOVERNMENT, BUT NOT MIX THE ROLES. SUPPORT OF OTHER PARTIES (EXCEPT MSI) IS NOT EXCLUDED. DEMARTINO ALSO RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION THE POSSIBILITY OF A LEFTIST GOVERNMENT OF "51 PERCENT" IF DC REFUSES A "GRAND COALITION" IN FACE OF A FUTURE LEFTIST MAJORITY, AS IT DID IN SOME INSTANCES ON REGIONAL LEVEL.

DEMARTINO DECLARED THE CENTER-LEFT DEAD, BUT STATED THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIPE FOR THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT. TO ACHIEVE THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE REQUIRES GUADUAL, CAUTIOUS MOVEMENT TOWARD SOCIALISM, A MORE EQUAL BALANCE OF FORCE BETWEEN THE PCI AND PSI, AND PCI ABANDONMENT OF ITS EQUIVOCATION ON AUTHORITARIAN COMMUNISM, AND ITS TIES WITH THE USSR.

WHILE GENEROUSLY PRAISING AND ACCEPTING AS GENUINE BERLINGUER'S "HISTORIC CHOICE" IN MOSCOW, DEMARTINO DOES NO CONSIDER THE PROCESS OF DETACHMENT COMPLETE. HE ALSO CHALLENGED INNER CONTRADICTIONS OF THE PCI. IN CONTRAST, HE WAS SURPRISINGLY MODERATE TOWARD THE DC.

IN FOREIGN POLICY, DEMARTINO EXPLICITLY ABANDONED TRADITIONAL SOCIALIST NEUTRALISM AND SUPPORTED GENERAL WESTERN POLICY IN EUROPE. HE MADE NO CRITICISM OF THE US. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CURRENT SITUATION: ON THE BURNING POLITICAL QUESTIONS OF THE DAY, DEMARTINO GAVE FEW PRECISE LEADS TO THE DELEGATES. HE DID NOT EVEN ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF ANTICIPATED ELECTIONS. HE LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF THE PSI'S RETURN TO GOVERNMENT WITH THE DC, BUT DID NOT DEFINE THE CONDITIONS OF TIMING BEYOND THOSE COMPRISING A NEW POLITICAL DEPARTURE WITHOUT DC HEGEMONY, NO A PRIORI CLOSURE TO THE LEFT, AND GRADUAL MOVEMENT TOWARD SOCAILISM. THE COMMUNISTS THEN WOULD BE FREE EITHER TO PLAY THE ROLE OF THE OPPOSITION, OR FULLY SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT, BUT THE PSI WOULD NOT TOLERATE A MIXTURE OF THE TWO ROLES. FOR THE DC-PSI OPTION, DEMARTINO MADE CLEAR THAT THE RESULTS OF THE DC CONGRESS WILL BE DETERMINING.

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2. THE 51 PERCENT: SOMEWHAT BALANCING DEMARINTO'S CLEAR OPENING TO THE DC WAS HIS DISCUSSION OF THE OPTION OF THE 51 PERCENT. FIFTY-ONE PERCENT WAS NOT LONGER A UTOPIAN PROSPECT. THOUGH HE EXPLICITLY AGREED WITH THE PCI'S OBJECTIONS TO IT, DEMARTINO SAID THEY DO NOT END DISCUSSION OF IT. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY HOW THE PSI AND THE LEFT SHOULD REACT IF THE DC AND OTHER PARTIES REFUSED TO ENTER A GRAND COALITION, AS OCCURRED IN SOME OF THE

REGIONS, IN THE FACE OF A MAJORITY OF THE LEFT. (COMMENT: THE LEFT WENT AHEAD AND FORMED EVEN MINORITY GOVERNMENTS "OPEN" TO OTHER PARTIES.)

3. THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE: DEMARTINO'S DISCUSSION OF THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE, WHICH IS THE THEME OF THE CONGRESS, WAS MOST REMARKABLE FOR ITS EMPHASIS ON GRADUALNESS, MODERATION, CAUTION, AND THE NEED TO AVOID VACUUMS OF POWER. THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIONS TO A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT IN THE NEAR TERM REMAINS THE DISPARITY OF FORCES BETWEEN THE PSI AND PCI, AND THE PCI'S CONTINUING TIES TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AND THE USSR (SEE BELOW). NEVERTHELESS HE WAS EVEN MORE EMPHATIC THAT THE ERA OF THE CENTER-LEFT WAS OVER, THAT A NEW ONE HAD BEGUN, AND THAT THE SOCIALISTS WOULD INSIST ON MOVEMENT TOWARD SOCIALISM. IN THIS REGARD, HIS LENGTHY CRITICISM OF "CAPITALISM" AS INADEQUATE TO CONFRONT ITALY'S PRESENT PROBLEMS INDICATES THE KIND OF ECONOMICS THE SOCIALISTS WILL INSIST ON FOR ANY FUTURE GOVERNMENT.

4. THE PCI: IN DEVELOPING HIS REASONS WHY THE TIME WAS NOT RIPE FOR THE ALTERNATIVE, DEMARTINO WAS SURPRISINGLY HARSH TOWARD THE PCI. HE DID INDEED LIBERALLY PRAISE BERLINGUER FOR MAKING A "HISTORIC CHOICE" IN MOSCOW, AND EXPLICITLY ACCEPTED THE CHOICE AS GENUINE AND NOT TACTICAL. BUT DEMARTINO DOES NOT CONSIDER THE PCI'S TRANSITION TO COMPLETE AUTONOMY FROM MOSCOW AS COMPLETE. HE OBJECTED PARTICULARLY TO THE FORMULA OF "UNITY IN DIVERSITY" WHICH EQUALLY LEGITIMIZES AUTHORITARIAN COMMUNISM IN EASTERN EUROPE AND DEMOCRATIC COMMUNISM IN WESTERN EUROPE. HE ASKED SARCASTICALLY WHICH IS IMPLIED BY THE PCI'S FREQUENT STATEMENTS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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SOLIDARITY WITH THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT LED BY THE USSR, REPEATED ESPECIALLY WHEN REASONS FOR POLEMICS BETWEEN THEM ARISE. AND WHAT IMPLICATIONS HE ASKED DOES SUCH BEHAVIOR IMPLY, NOT ONLY FOR THE PCI'S INTERNATIONAL POSITION, BUT FOR ITS VERY PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIZATION? DEMARTINO'S INSINUATION THAT EVEN THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS OF THE PCI IS NOT COMPLETE IS REINFORCED BY HIS DISCUSSION OF "EURO-COMMUNISM" WHICH HE SAID IS BETTER TERMED WESTERN COMMUNISM. THE PSI WAS FORCED TO NOTE CERTAIN CONTRADICTIONS. SPEAKING OF THE FRENCH PARTY, HE NOTED THE MONOLITHIC CHARACTER WITH WHICH THE OPPOSITE THEORY (PLURALISM) WAS PROCLAIMED: WITHOUT DISSENT, WITHOUT SURPRISES, WITHOUT TUMULT. ANOTHER CONTRADICTION IS THE "EXALTATION OF FIDELITY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION, AS THOUGH IS HAD NOT INITIATED A COURSE WHICH LEADS TO BASIC

DIFFERENCES WITH THE SOVIET UNION. FURTHERMORE, THE PSI
COULD NOT FORGET THE INTOLERANT POSITION MAINTAINED ONLY
A FEW YEARS AGO BY THE PCF TOWARD GARAUDY'S "HERESY."
ALL OF THIS IS SAID NOT TO DENY THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
EVENT, "BUT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE ROAD TO BE
TRAVELED IS STILL IMPASSABLE (IMPERVIO), BECAUSE EVERY-
ONE IS HEIR TO HIS OWN HISTORY, AND CANNOT FREE HIMSELF
FROM IT IN A DAY."

5. THE DC: TOWARD THE DC DEMARTINO WAS SURPRISINGLY
MODERATE. THOUGH BLAMING IT THROUGHOUT HIS ADDRESS
FOR THE FAILURE TO SOLVE ALL OF ITALY'S PRESSING
PROBLEMS, HE DID NOT DWELL ON DEMOGOGIC THEMES SUCH
AS CORRUPTION AND SCANDALS. HE RESERVED HIS APPLAUSE-
ROUSING SALLIES SOLELY TO ATTACK PRESISTING DC ATTEMPTS
TO MAINTAIN ITS HEGEMONY, EMPHATICALLY PRONOUNCED DEAD
ALONG WITH THE CENTER-LEFT.

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6. FOREIGN POLICY: DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF DELEGATES FROM MAY LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND RADICAL SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PARTIES, DEMARTINO'S REMARKS ON FOREIGN POLICY CONTAINED NO ATTACKS ON "US IMPERIALISM." IT WAS AN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY BALANCED AND STATESMANLIKE PERFORMANCE FOR A PSI LEADER. DEMARTINO NOTED THAT THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL BALANCE OF POWER RESTS ON A BIPOLAR EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS WITH A TENDENCY TOWARD DETENTE. CONFIDENTIAL

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THIS JUSTIFIES ABANDONMENT BY THE PSI OF ITS TRADITIONAL NEUTRALISM, AND ACTIVE SUPPORT OF ITALIAN AUTONOMY AND EUROPEAN UNITY WITHIN EXISTING ALLIANCES. DEMARTINO REJECTED HOWEVER A STATIC CONCEPTION OF THE BALANCE, AND FAVORED AUTONOMOUS TENDENCIES IN BOTH BLOCS, CITING AS FAVORABLE EXAMPLES WEST GERMANY'S OSTPOLITIK, AND CEAUSESCU'S POLICY FOR ROMANIA. HE REGRETTED THAT THE UNILATERAL MOVES OF GREECE AND TURKEY REGARDING NATO HAD NOT BEEN USED TO DEMAND COMPENSATION DILUTION OF THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE BALKANS. THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS QUO IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AFTER THE SOVIET OCCUPATION AND THE PERSECUTION OF DUBCEK AND HIS FOLLOWERS ONLY REINFORCES CONSERVATIVE TENDENCIES IN BOTH CAMPS AND KEEP OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF A RETURN TO THE COLD WAR. HE LAMENTED THAT THE WEST LEAVES IT TO THE SOVIETS TO SUPPORT LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AS IN ANGOLA.

7. ATMOSPHERE AND APPLAUSE: TWO SUBJECTS STIRRED BY FAR THE MOST APPLAUSE: DEMARTINO'S STATEMENT THAT THE PSI HAD SHOWN FAR TOO MUCH PATIENCE IN LEAVING THE CENTER-LEFT SURVIVE AS LONG AS IT DID, AND HIS DEFINITION OF THE ALTERNATIVE "AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO DC HEGEMONY, AND THEREFORE AN ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT." VIGOROUS AND EQUAL APPLAUSE GREETED HIS ATTACKS ON DC HEGEMONY AND HIS REBUTTALS OF PCI CRITICISM OF THE PSI FOR PROVOKING THE CRISIS. APPLAUSE WAS MODERATE BUT FIRM WHEN HE PRAISED BERLINGUER'S STAND IN MOSCOW, BUT WAS ALMOST NON-EXISTENT WHEN HE EXPOSED THE PCI'S INNER CONTRADICTIONS. FOR THE REST THE ATMOSPHERE WAS SUBDUED. DEMARTINO'S TWO-HOUR RAPIDLY READY ANALYSIS OF, AND PSI SOLUTIONS FOR, EVERY ILL OF ITALY DID NOT PROVIDE THE DELEGATES WITH

MANY OPENING OPPORTUNITIES TO VENT EMOTIONS.

CHILEAN SOCIALIST LEADER ALTAMIRANO WAS WILDLY AND REPEATEDLY APPLAUDED. (SOARES DID NOT ATTEND THE FIRST DAY'S SESSION.) THOUGH PARTY SECRETARIES BERLINGUER (PCI), ZACCAGNINI (DC), BIASINI (PRI), AND ZANONE (PLI) WERE PRESENT, THE PRESENCE OF NONE WAS NOTED FROM THE CHAIR, AND NONE WAS APPLAUDED. THE ONLY (MILD) HISSES OF THE DAY WERE EVOKED BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A MESSAGE OF GOOD WISHES FROM PRESIDENT LEONE WAS TO BE READ.

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8. COMMENT: DEMARTINO'S OBVIOUS INTENT SEEMED TO BE:

(1) TO GIVE THE PSI A COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAM IN LINE WITH ITS "PROGRESSIVE" ASPIRATIONS; (2) TO SHAKE OFF THE PARTY'S ABYSMAL INFERIORITY COMPLEX VIS-A-VIS THE PCI; (3) TO BRING THE PSI TO ABANDON ITS ROMANTIC AND MAXIMALIST IDEOLOGY ON BOTH SOCIAL AND INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS; AND (4) TO OVERCOME ITS TRADITIONAL PROVINCIALISM VIS-A-VIS OTHER EUROPEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES. THE FRENCH INFLUENCE IS CLEARLY APPARENT. WHETHER DEMARTINO CAN ENTERTAIN ANY HOPE OF SUCCEEDING REMAINS TO BE SEEN IN THE DEBATE NOW BEGINNING.

9. WITH REGARD TO THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, DEMARTINO CONTINUED TO DO WHAT HE HAS BEEN DOING FOR THE BETTER PART OF A YEAR: KEEPING PSI OPTIONS OPEN FOR EITHER A RETURN TO GOVERNMENT WITH THE DC, OR A FINAL PLUNGE TO THE LEFT. THE RESULTS OF THE NEXT NATIONAL ELECTIONS, MORE THAN ANY OTHER FACTOR, WILL DETERMINE THE CHOICE. MEANWHILE, THE PSI, AS DEMARTINO SAID EXPLICITLY, WILL REMAIN "FLEXIBLE", AND TRY TO KEEP THE BALL IN THE DC COURT. VOLPE

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